

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4583
INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY BERN
AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 0232

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, CZ, GW, AU
SUBJECT: SOME PERSPECTIVE OF CZECHOSLOVAK AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT

REF VIENNA 0660

1. AMBASSADOR KADNAR'S STATEMENT REPORTED IN REFTEL IS SOMEWHAT SELF-SERVING(HIS ASSIGNMENT TO VIENNA WAS KNOWN IN PRAGUE AS EARLY AS MAY 1977, A LOW POINT IN CZECH-AUSTRIAN RELATIONS, AND WE DOUBT HE WAS EVER OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED FOR THE UN POSITION), BUT THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE GOC WANTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH GERMANIC NEIGHBORS TO THE WEST AND SOUTH TO THE EXTENT IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES AND HISTORICAL ANTAGONISMS PERMIT. THE RECENT VISIT OF PREMIER STROUGAL TO VIENNA AND THE EXPECTED APRIL VISIT OF PRESIDENT HUSAK TO BONN ARE THE BEST EVIDENCE OF THIS.

2. HOW FAR THE DESIRE FOR BETTER RELATIONS WILL BE TRANSLATED INTO ACTION IS, HOWEVER, PROBLEMATIC. OUR AUSTRIAN COLLEAGUES TELL US THAT THE VARIOUS MIXED COMMISSIONS SET UP TO DEAL WITH ROUTINE BORDER MATTERS ARE WORKING WELL, BUT IN SUCH AREAS AS CULTURAL EXCHANGES THE AUSTRIANS GET NO BETTER TREATMENT THAN WE OR OTHER NATO COUNTRIES (SENIOR GOVERNMENT AND FILM INDUSTRY
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OFFICIALS STAYED AWAY FROM A RECENT AUSTRIAN FILM WEEK IN DROVES). THE BERLIN ISSUE HAS SO FAR KEPT FRG-CCZECHOSLOVAK RELATIONS FROM REACHING THE POINT OF HAVING MIXED COMMISSIONS AND THE HUSAK VISIT SEEMS UNLIKELY TO BREAK THIS IMPASSE. PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT OF ECONOMIC TIES WITH THE FRG AND AUSTRIA APPEAR LIMITED ONLY BE CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S ABILITY TO PRODUCE ACCEPTABLE EXPORT PRODUCTS AND ITS HESITANCY TO BORROW IN THE WEST TO

FINANCE IMPORTS OF GOODS AND TECHNOLOGY. IMPROVEMENT OF POLITICAL
RELATIONS WILL, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO BE CLOUDED AS LONG AS FORMER
SUDENTEN GERMANS LIVE AND AS LONG AS THE GERMANIC PEOPLES
UNMISTAKABLY REGARD CZECHOSLOVAKIA AS AN UNDERDEVELOPED
COUNTRY--INDEED AS A LOST COLONY--NEEDING THEIR BENIGN
SUPERVISION TO REACH A SUITABLE CULTURAL LEVEL.
BYRNE

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NNN

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